

- If you notice someone suspicious near your car, walk in a different direction toward a public place and call for help.
- If a person in civilian clothes driving an unmarked car who shows you what appears to be a police badge, stop in a public place. Don't roll down your window or get out of the car. Instead, request that a marked police car be called.
- If your car is hit from behind and it seems to be deliberate, stay in the car with the doors locked. Call or wait for the police to arrive.
- Most police experts do not recommend that you carry weapons in your car. Instead, use items like flashlights, purses, pens, and keys for protection.
- If someone forces you to drive your car in an abduction, try to attract the attention of the police by turning off the lights, speeding, driving as if you were intoxicated, or running into something.
- Never follow a stranger who offers to help you. Call for assistance or wait in your vehicle for assistance to arrive. Ask non-law enforcement assistance to call the local police department.

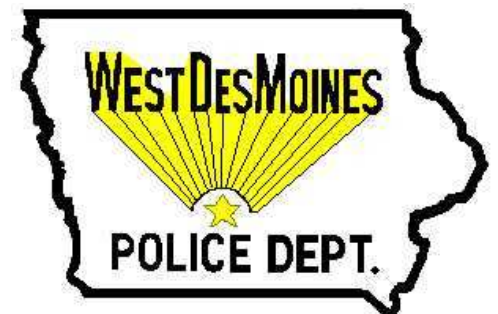
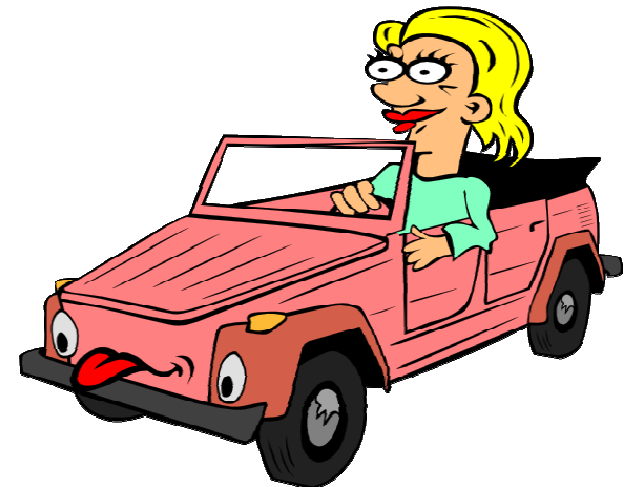
**[www.wdm-ia.com](http://www.wdm-ia.com)**



**West Des Moines Police Department  
250 George M. Mills Civic Parkway  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
(515) 222-3333**



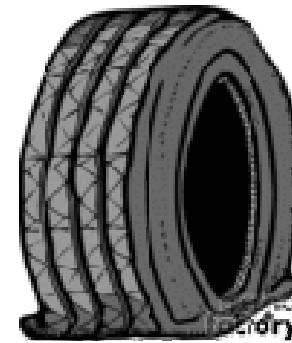
## **Tips for Women Who Drive Alone**



***If you drive alone you can improve your personal safety by following a few simple tips.....***

- Keep your car in good condition to avoid breakdowns.
- Hold your keys in your hand as you approach your parked car. Experts say you are most vulnerable when you are getting into or out of your car.
- Park in well lighted areas.
- Check the back seat before getting into the car, even if you left it with the doors locked.
- Lock vehicle doors while driving.
- Lock all doors and roll up the windows when you park your vehicle.
- Keep the phone number of your AAA emergency road service in your car and your purse.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Sound the horn in potentially dangerous situations.

- To help deter abductions in your own car, consider having it equipped with an alarm that goes off a few seconds after you enter the car unless you turn it off.
- Sound your vehicle alarm if you are being attacked.
- If your car becomes disabled, lock yourself in and turn on the fourway flashers until the police arrive.
- Always travel with a cell phone. You can call 911 on a charged phone even without service.
- If you drive alone in the winter, keep emergency items such as a traction mat, a shovel and a bag of sand or kitty litter in your trunk. Flares, blankets, water, flashlight, canned food and a reflective “Help” sign are also useful.



- If you have a flat tire in a dark or dangerous location, drive slowly to the nearest service station or public place. Even if you ruin the tire, you will not have risked your life.
- Always park in a central, well-lighted place, and well traveled area. Try to approach the driver's side of the car when you return.
- Avoid short cuts that take you through unfamiliar or unsafe areas.

